



April 17, 2007

H.R. 865 - Copper Valley Native Allotment Resolution Act of 2007

Floor Situation

H.R. 865 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Don Young (R-AK) on February 6, 2007. The bill was ordered to be reported from the Committee on Natural Resources, by voice vote, on March 7, 2007.

H.R. 865 is expected to be considered on the floor on April 17, 2007.

Summary

H.R. 865 grants to the Copper Valley Electric Association (CVEA) rights-of-way across the Native allotments for an electric transmission line owned by the CVEA.

This Act does not apply to land owned by Ahtna, Inc. and any prior or current right-of-way agreements that may exist between Ahtna, Inc. and the Copper Valley Electric Association or the State.

H.R. 865 also rectifies a payment issues between CVEA and the Department of the Interior.

Background

The Copper Valley Electric Association (CVEA) was founded in 1954 and currently serves 3,600 Alaskans. Alaska was admitted to the Union in 1959. Copper Valley applied for rights of way to use land in Alaska for the purpose of installing electrical lines and won those rights. In 1987 certain allotments of lands were given to the Native Alaskans by the Department of Interior under the Alaska Native Allotment Act of 1906. In 14 cases, the rights of way for land were already given to CVEA and therefore were already in use. The Native Americans claims were accepted and now CVEA stands in trespass on the lands. In order to rectify the situation, this legislation gives the lands in question to the CVEA while compensating the Native Alaskan's for the loss of their land.

Cost

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that implementing H.R. 865 would not have a significant effect on the federal budget. CBO further estimates that granting rights-of-way would increase the Bureau of Land Management's administrative costs to prepare assessments of the value of the rights-of-way by less than \$500,000, assuming the availability of appropriated funds. Compensation paid to allotment holders would be paid from the Treasury's permanent Judgment Fund, and would be considered an increase in direct spending of as much as \$150,000, CBO estimates. Enacting H.R. 865 would not affect revenues.

Staff Contact

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